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The Eastern Mail (Vol. 16, No. 26): January 1, 1863

Ephraim Maxham

Daniel Ripley Wing

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From the Student and Schoolmaster.

A DARK NIGHT;
OR, A GRANDMOTHER'S STORY.

Aunt Hetty sat by the fire and looked disconsolately into the coals. Her fingers moved now and then, as if she were knitting, though the work had dropped into her lap.

"The truth is, child," said she at length, "and you may be well know it first as last, your mother cannot get over this. She is sinking, as sure as need be."

"My heart gave one jump, but I forced it to be still and answered quietly, 'Why, I don't see any reason, Aunt Hetty, that you should say so. The doctor doesn't say it decidedly.'"

"I don't care what he says; I know what he thinks, and I know what I think!"

"Aunt Hetty," said I, stopping as I was folding the table cloth, "we don't know, any of us, and there isn't much use in borrowing trouble."

"All come fast enough to be sure, the Lord knows!"

I took my sewing and went up stairs; but mother was asleep, so I came down again and seated myself by the window. A new and heavy load was pressing on my heart, but I determined to keep it as far away as possible. I looked out of the window; the view was drearier, if possible, than that within. Dull, leaden clouds, overhanging the brown fields. The woods, night, in the sunshine, had looked cheery in their autumn dress; but to-day they were all of decay and coming winter. The wind howled and whistled now and then around the house, rattling the shutters and making me involuntarily draw my shawl closer.

"Child!" Aunt Hetty began again, (she always called me child, and would if I had been fifty years more than I am), "what you're to do when she's gone. Dear knows it will be hard for you!"

"I can tell one thing, I shall not do, I answered, speaking to myself more than to her, 'I shall not borrow trouble, whatever may come.'"

"Wait till you know what is to come." "I will wait, Aunt Hetty, and when I see the end, as you say, I shall know whether it's best to worry!" I tried to speak cheerfully but her tone depressed me.

"So I used to say, but I've learned there's a great deal of trouble a coming for everybody, in this world!"

"I dare say I shall learn that yet," said I, my lips quivering in spite of myself, "and I haven't had so sunny a time thus far that I don't know a little about it already, too."

"Well, dear knows what'll be the end!" I only hope it won't be too hard with us all!"

"I went to my Aunt Hetty and laid my hand upon her shoulder. 'Aunt, said I, we are weak enough any of us, and I am not sure but there is a new trial coming, as you say; but we must not discourage each other. We need to be strong as we can; and one thing is settled, we must not borrow trouble! God will not try us more than we can bear.'"

Aunt Hetty said little more, and we sat in silence by the fire, until the twilight began to draw on and I knew that my mother would be awake. I was strangely calm as I sat and talked with her about the future, or moved about the room attending to her wants. Late in the evening, as I kissed her before leaving for a few hours, she said faintly, "what ever else you do, dear Jane, be patient and don't look too far ahead!"

How many times afterwards I thought of those words! "It was well I had them to remember, or my own resolution might have been shaken to its fall."

It was only five weeks after that she died, and as Aunt Hetty went to lie with a half-brother, in a distant part of the State, I was left entirely alone. I preferred to be alone, for I had much to do and much to think of. The world was before me. I must work, for our funds had long been running low. I must leave the old house, and my mother's grave, the only places in the world that seemed to have any claim upon me. I can do it, I said to myself, "there is nothing now I cannot do, except to borrow trouble!"

I found a place in a neighboring town, where I could do little more than board and clothe myself by teaching and sewing. I spent the last night at the old place. When my fire in the desolate kitchen burned low, I took up the light and went up the echoing stairs, through the long, low entry to my mother's chamber. The cold moonbeams fell upon its bare floor, and at most mockingly lighted up the empty room. I recalled the scenes of that room—the slow decline, the hopes, the fears, the last words, the last kiss, the last look, the hush of death, and now the emptiness! I knelt and prayed God in mercy help me never to murmur, how ever Time hand may press. Then I went out.

I found my new home in many respects a pleasant one. I liked the family, and I believe they liked me. Circumstances, however, combined to decide them against continuing a private teacher for their children, after the first year, and I was adrift! Friends I had none to whom I could or could apply. It was a time of darkness. I sought in vain for employment—for work of any kind—only a mere niche where I might stand; only a footing where I might lean. In vain. My motto I still kept: Never borrow trouble, and I added, or tried to do—never despair! Still no place. "Lord keep me patient in this trial!"

I pleaded, "My money diminished slowly—soon it was gone, no opening yet! Now there is no help but in Time, I cried. I turned my footsteps toward the old home. It seemed to be unoccupied for a few days. Here, at least, I can wait, I said. It was almost evening when I reached it, worn and exhausted, without food or the wherewith to purchase. "When morning comes, I thought, 'I will go to the neighbors. It cannot be the Lord's will that I should starve, so long as they have bread.'"

I sought my mother's room. Once there, and memories thronged over me in one wild rush, and I gave myself up, not attempting to restrain them. I could not weep; it seemed to me my days of weeping were past; that I stood on new and strange ground; but that still, thought scarcely by my own will, my hand was in the mighty Hand that had so long led me. I remember feeling drowsy, and then came a long, long blank. Time, and place, and people were confused. Day after day I lay in a delicious stupor—only conscious that I was resting after a long toil. Truly, it was a blessed rest for when I awoke at last, and found my head feebly toward the window, through which I could see the red light streaming up the east, I was refreshed. The night seemed to me as past, and I was ready for the day. "I had found kind friends, or rather kind friends had found me, with a fever on the morning following that night of desolation; and, as if by my own mother could, had they not been back to life. Their kindness was not repaid, when I was able once more to go about; but through their exertions I was provided with a pleasant situation, where I remained until my grandfather provided a pleasant home for me."

There have been sorrows since; the Lord knows it should be tempted to forget, also; but he has led me very gently. That was indeed

VOL. XVI.

WATERVILLE, MAINE.... THURSDAY, JAN. 1, 1862.

NO. 26.

The Eastern Mail.

RPH MAXHAM, J. DANIEL WING, EDITORS.

WATERVILLE... JAN. 1, 1862.

AGENTS FOR THE MAIL.

S. M. PETERSON & CO., Newspaper Agents, No. 10 State street, Boston, and 119 Nassau street, New York, are Agents for the Eastern Mail, and are authorized to receive advertisements and subscriptions, at the same rates as required at this office.

S. K. NILES, Successor to Y. B. Palmer, Newspaper Advertising Agent, No. 1 Scollay's Building, Court street, Boston, is authorized to receive Advertisements at the same rates as required by this office.

Advertisers abroad are referred to the agents named above.

ALL LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Relating either to the business or editorial department of this paper, should be addressed to 'MAXHAM & WING, or 'NILES, State Office.'

CHRISTMAS. We have hardly time to note

the pleasures of Christmas before the New Year comes in with its festivities. Of course we don't propose to make a charge of the two holidays are evidently too near together. They jostle each other, and are in danger of becoming in time one institution in which the peculiarities of both will be forgotten. Even now Santa Claus is more conspicuous than the divine Nazarene, and his favors are remembered further on towards New Year, especially by the children. It may be partly for this reason, as well as for past memories towards the Catholics, that our pilgrim fathers so long overlooked the propriety of marking with any peculiar festivities the day that gave birth to the Redeemer. They put off their good time to New Year—and apparently, we think, with no commendable reason. Not that we would undervalue another year given to this fair life, especially just as the old year is giving out; but there seems such marked propriety as well as profit in making a universal holiday of this 'day of all the days,' that if necessary we could even see New Year festivities overlooked to give it room. But there is no need—for our recognized holidays are too few, and we all fall into the merriment of Christmas as naturally as flowers open to sunshine.

Christmas was a merry festival at the Congregational church, where the children met in the afternoon to gather the fruit of their well laden tree, and enjoy the refreshments and other pleasures prepared for them. In the evening there was a change of audience, and the good things said, sung and eaten were worthy of all praise. How many baskets would have held what the multitude left cannot be guessed, but the eating was less miraculous than natural—perfectly natural. But indeed, there was a good time.

The Baptists, wary as they are of innovations, made their emphatic mark in favor of Merry Christmas. They literally crammed the house of Dea. Stevens, carrying their own good things for the tables—for Christmas is a gastronomic festival ever since the invention of Christmas pies—and leaving behind, at a late hour, not merely fragments of good living, but sundry pieces of silver ware, worthy of a Christmas board in the olden times. Deacon Stevens has had long service as superintendent of the Sabbath School; and it was to express their appreciation of the services thus rendered, as well as to make an occasion for Christmas, that the visit was planned—and so nicely and pleasantly carried out.

The Unitarians made a utilitarian matter of Christmas, and turned the merriment over to New Year. They surprised their pastor with a donation, and arranged for a social gathering a week later, to greet the advent of '63. The first was limited to adults, but the last was free to old and young.

For some reason the Universalists, who first introduced the stranger Christmas to church fellowship in Waterville, some years ago, left it this year for others to entertain. They have however the pleasure of seeing their work prosper, for henceforth the same Christmas belongs to all the world; beside, belongs to everybody in Waterville.

PART OF THE BATTLE. We are permitted to copy from a letter written by an officer in the 20th Maine to his friend in Waterville, after the battle of Fredericksburg:

"We crossed the river about 3 P. M., and were drawn up in line of battle just beyond the city, and under the fire of the enemy. We were ordered to lie down for better protection, and wait orders. Here we remained till 4 1/2, when orders came, but before I tell you what they were, I must tell you that we could see our troops charging and being charged in turn, over a small elevation before us. Our boys would charge and drive the enemy over the hill; then the rebels would open shell upon them and drive them back; again they would rally and charge, and again be driven back. Thus they were wavering, when the order came, 'Twentieth Maine—fix bayonets—forward!' On we moved with gleaming bayonets, over fences, ditches and walls, and around buildings, while the air was thick with 'minie' pippers and the hoarse rumbling of broken shells. Luckily for us their fire was high, and only a few men were lost in this charge. Having crossed a gully we took the post on the hill where we had seen the succession of possession. Oh, what a place! The struggling armies had beaten the ground into mortar, which was mingled with the bodies, blood and arms of the slain! Here we halted and were ordered to lie down on our faces and allow the shot of the enemy to pass over us. The men would rise and fire, then lie down and load. Darkness soon came on and the firing ceased; when the men began to crawl about to find pieces of fence and other traps to keep them from sinking into the mud.

Every man slept in his place in the ranks, with his head to the enemy and bayonet fixed, most of us with one other bed than the loathsome mixture mentioned.

After more than thirty hours in this position, "lying flat," as the writer says, they were relieved and took quarters in the city."

"Monday was spent in the city, some rummaging about for pleasure and some for plunder. In the evening there came the call, '20th Maine—fall in!' We were soon on the march towards the field. We took a position a little to the right of that of Saturday. It was the most hazardous I ever saw. We were in the very face of the enemy, with no protection but a few half prepared rifle pits. The guns of the men who had been killed and wounded on this spot told a dreadful story. I actually made a good defence by piling up rifles; and Colonel Ames told some of the men, if there was not time to dig pits, to pile up the dead bodies for defence! My outposts were within a stone's throw of the rebels. We could almost count the buttons on their coats as they passed from pit to pit; and they impudently marched a whole brigade by us, so near that our boys came running in and reported the enemy were charging. They however passed away quietly, their object being to relieve pickets."

"About 4 o'clock Tuesday morning, as we were actively engaged in completing our pits, the order came for us to fall in and withdraw in perfect silence, as our troops had already crossed the river, evacuating the city."

The Lewiston Journal says, "Crimoline is a way Providence has." No doubt—an improved way, though. The same paper gives thanks for a porringer of cider! Wonder if Providence has any such way as that? How large is your mug, brother D?

BAPTIST SABBATH SCHOOL. — At the Monthly Concert, on Sabbath evening, Dea. Stevens, the Superintendent made a report, from which we learn that there have been 230 persons connected with the school during the year past—the average attendance being 112.

The attendance has been less than it would have been but for the Mission Schools, six of which have been maintained, as follows:—

One on the Plains, with 75 members; One in the Penney District, with 80 members; One in the Marston District, with 80 members; one on the Neck, with 50 members; one in the Town District in Winslow, with 45 members; and another in Winslow, opposite the Colleges, with 40 members.

Encouraging reports were presented of several of these schools, most of which have a vacation during the winter. They are partially supplied with books and teachers from the parent school in the village, and there has been a steady increase in the interest and attendance from the commencement.

Interesting remarks were made at the Concert by Mr. Lamb, of the Academy, and by Mr. W. T. Chase, the Superintendent of the Sabbath School on the Plains, who is also the teacher of the Primary school in that neighborhood. The last named gentleman made a warm and earnest appeal in behalf of those "Greeks at our doors"—the Canadian French—who all our village people should have heard and heeded. Doing our duty ever so faithfully to the heathen on the other side of the globe, or to the blacks at the South, will never atone for our neglect of the temporal and spiritual well being of the destitute ones in our midst. Of the 900 scholars enrolled in the village district, one third are children of French parentage; and, leaving the adults out of the calculation, three hundred immortal souls are worth looking after, even if they are "nobody but French."

Did Gov. Sprague fire a salute when he heard of the battle of Fredericksburg? [Republican Journal.]

No; but your brother traitors of Charleston illuminated their city when they heard of Northern Democratic victories at the polls.

The construction of the Aroostook railroad, in Maine, is now urged upon Government as a 'military necessity.' It would be worth a dozen forts, a sea means of defence, in a war with Great Britain.

CADETS OF TEMPERANCE.—The following is a list of the Officers of Wat. Section No. 5:—

W. H. Rounds, W. A. Charnwood, Wescott, V. A. E. S. Sheldon, S. C. H. Percival, A. S. H. S. Ware, T. F. A. Thompson, A. T. M. C. Percival, P. W. A. L. A. Wheeler, Chaplain.

Hattie Low, 1st Visitor. Ella Chandler, 2d Visitor. W. F. Dyer, G. F. E. Lyford, A. S. Maxwell, W. G. K. Wentworth, Sentinel.

"The religion of some men is mere matter of ornament"—so say the papers. Strange how folks will decorate themselves to cheat the devil, when he was the inventor of the first ornamental dress mentioned in history.

COOL, DECIDEDLY. An officer in the 20th Maine reg't, writing to a lady in this place, after detailing in graphic terms the part his regiment took in the battle of Fredericksburg, reverts to the familiar topics of friendship, and is apparently closing his epistle, when he happens to think—"O, I forgot to tell you how a shell struck the brim of my hat as I was leading the charge on Saturday. It did no damage, but made me wink prematurely."

JUST AS WE EXPECTED.—A letter from the 24th Maine regiment, to the Augusta Age, says that a petition, signed by the Lt. Col. the Major, and 23 line officers, had been presented to Col. Atwood asking him to resign. The inefficiency of the Colonel, it is said, has brought the regiment into bad condition.

Editors must hold themselves remarkably cheap in Wisconsin. No less than 13 of them have gone into the legislature—3 in the Senate and 10 in the House.

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OUR TABLE.

THE CONTINENTAL MONTHLY.—The January number of this magazine, devoted to Literature and National Policy, is big with promises of increased attractions for the coming year. The political articles are—Congress, the Rebellion, by Hon. F. P. Stanton; The Union, No. 3—New York and Virginia Compared, &c., by Hon. Robert J. Walker; American Destiny, by John Stahl Patterson. The Hugenots of New Rochelle, by Hon. G. P. Dissoy, is an interesting chapter of American History. No. 10 of Leland's Macaroni and Canvases, though not so full of rollicking fun as some of its predecessors, will be relished by the reader; 'I, or Squire' in the City, by a new contributor, is rich and racy, and we shall desire more of his acquaintance. The Mishaps of Miss Hobbs might have been omitted. Kimball's story, Was He Successful? is continued; An Englishman in South Carolina, is concluded—and there are several other articles of interest and value, with some judicious criticisms of new books.

Under its present able management The Continental is meeting with the success it deserves. Published by John F. Trow, 56 Greene St., New York, at \$3 a year.

NORTH BRITAIN REVIEW.—The November number has the following table of contents:—

Christian Individuality. The Austrian Empire in 1862. Poems by A. H. Clough. Assimilation of Law, France and Scotland—M. Michel. Popular Proprietary Literature. Syria and the Eastern Question. St. Clement's Eve. The American Conflict.

The four great British Quarterly Reviews and Blackwood's Monthly, are promptly issued by L. Scott & Co. 64 Gold Street, New York. Terms of subscription. For any one of the four Reviews \$3 per annum any two Reviews \$5; any three Reviews \$7; all four Reviews \$8; Blackwood's Magazine \$3; Blackwood and three Reviews \$9; Blackwood and the four Reviews \$10—with large discounts to clubs. In all the principal cities and towns, these works will be delivered free of postage.

When sent by mail, the postage to any part of the U. States will be but 24 cents a year for 'Blackwood,' and but 41 cents a year for each of the Reviews.

THE LADIES' REPERTORY.—The old friends of this magazine will look upon the January number with pride and delight. For embellishments it contains two fine steel engravings—Lake George in the Olden Time, and a portrait of Martha Washington; there is also an elegant title page for the new volume. An unusually large number of good articles appear in its pages, with several well written stories—the whole presenting an agreeable and entertaining variety for all members of the family.

Published by Poe & Hitchcock, Cincinnati, at \$2 50 a year. The work can be ordered of J. P. Magee, Boston, and all ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church will receive subscriptions.

MEANS & MANNER.—The January number—in addition to the ordinary embellishments, which are always numerous and pretty, has an elegant portrait of 'Robert Merry,' on steel. All the boys and girls who have listened to his delightful 'Oats,' will be pleased to see this, for they have long had a curiosity to know just how their old friend looked. There are many good things down in the bill of fare for the new year, and among them a story entitled 'Philip S. O'War,' by a popular writer for children. Prizes are awarded monthly for the solution of problems and published in its pages, giving the young reader a chance for the profitable employment of his wit.

Published by J. N. Stearns, 111 Fulton Street, New York, at \$1 a year.

WAR OF REDEMPTION.—We are obliged to record another humiliating event—the capture of the Ariel, one of our California steamships, by the rebel steamer Alabama. The Ariel was taken near the east end of Cuba, while on her way from New York to Aspinwall, and after being detained two days was finally ransomed under a bond for \$293,000. All the arms and ammunition on board the Ariel were taken, with \$8000 in U. S. script; and 1400 marines and several U. S. officers, on board, were paroled.

Gen. Banks has arrived in New Orleans, superseding Gen. Butler, who is already on his way north where he will be tendered an important command. The meeting of the two officers was most amicable and cordial, and the new commandant was already moving with energy in his new field of action. We shall doubtless hear stirring news from the lower Mississippi soon.

Rebel cavalry raids are quite common in the rear and on the flank of the army of the Potomac, and cutlers and supply trains are occasionally captured. Stuart's men were repulsed, however, in a recent attack upon Dumfries and Occoquan.

Jeff. Davis is out with a counter proclamation, threatening to hang Butler—when he is caught; and ordering that no commissioned officer of the U. S. taken captive, shall be released on parole, before exchange, until this little job of hanging has been attended to. All the commissioned officers of the said Butler, too, when captured, shall be treated as criminals deserving death and shall be reserved for execution; and all other officers of the U. S., caught serving with negroes, shall be treated in the same way, while the negroes themselves will be summarily dealt with according to the laws of the States to which they belong.

Abraham's proclamation evidently touches a sore spot in rebeldom.

The rebels recently attempted to cross the Rappahannock on rafts, at a point 14 miles below Conway, for the purpose of capturing a squadron of Pennsylvania Cavalry doing picket duty along the river. The Union officer in command got wind of the affair, however, through some trusty blacks, and made arrangements for their repulse and capture; but some of his men firing too soon, the rebels were frightened away before they could be caught. The gunboat fleet in that quarter has moved farther down the river to avoid an ice embargo and capture by the rebels. In anticipation of the coming proclamation, large numbers of slaves have been sent South, though many manage to escape and come into our lines.

A Federal force now occupies Winchester. Gen. Foster, whose recent successes in North Carolina have made some noise, has promise of reinforcements, so that he may follow up his victories and inflict still harder blows upon the rebels.

Latest advice from New Orleans say that the change of command in that department is hailed with satisfaction by all parties. The

fleet had moved up the river, and Baton Rouge was again in our possession. It is a little curious that Gen. Banks's destination was known in New Orleans, through secret sources, a fortnight before his arrival.

News has come up to Memphis that a formidable Union force is advancing up the river, that Fort Hudson has fallen into Federal hands, and that the fleet was within 12 miles of Vicksburg.

Gen. Grant has fallen back to the north side of the Tallahatchie.

We have a report that Knoxville, in East Tennessee, has been taken by our troops under Col. Carter. Also that Rosecrans has driven the rebels into Murfreesboro'.

We have an account of a federal raid in Arkansas, by Gens. Blunt and Herron. By a forced march they crossed the Boston Mountains, surprised the rebels, drove them into Van Buren, on the Arkansas river, and then charging into the town, drove them across the river in confusion—taking over a hundred prisoners, capturing two steamboats and a large quantity of stores.

Contrabands have informed Gen. Naglee of a contemplated rebel attack on Gloucester Point and at last accounts he was arranging measures for defence. Two gunboats will aid him.

Another rebel cavalry raid into Maryland! Stuart crossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks on Tuesday night, with 1500 cavalry, and a battery of flying artillery, and is now in Maryland. Some think he is moving on Frederick, with the intention of destroying the bridge on the Monocacy river.

There are movements of both armies of the Potomac. The rebels are said to be moving their heavy guns from Fredericksburg, and retiring towards Bowling Green. Our pontoons have been in motion for several days and the gunboats are scattered from Belle Plain to Washington.

IRVING ON READING.—Washington Irving in a letter to his nephew, gave the following advice on reading:—

"Of all places I was ever in New York is one where more time is wasted at that precious period of life when the habits of knowledge are to be sown, and the seeds formed that are to determine the character and fortunes of after life. I speak this from sad experience. How many an hour of hard labor and hard study have I had to subject myself to, to atone in a slight degree for the hours which I suffered society to cheat me out of! Young people enter into society in America at an age that they are cooped up in schools in Europe. Do not waste your evenings in parties of pleasure; devote as much as possible to valuable reading. Take care not to lose what you learned at college. Keep up your knowledge of the learned languages, and endeavor to advance in them. Read history regularly and attentively. As your time for reading will be limited, do not waste it on any reading but such as will go towards informing your mind and improving your taste. Do not read for mere amusement. Do not seek to feed the imagination; that will extract food for itself out of the sternest studies. Do not read for the purpose of mere conversation, the popular works of the day, Reviews, Magazines, &c. Be content to appear ignorant of those topics rather than read through fear of appearing ignorant. The literature of the day is always the most piquant, the most immediately interesting, but is generally transient; it soon passes away and leaves no general knowledge, no permanent topic in the mind; and then it is so copious; if one yields his attention to contemporary literature, he is overwhelmed with it. Make yourself, on the other hand, well acquainted with the valuable standard authors, which have stood the test of time; they will always be in fashion; and in becoming intimately acquainted with them, you become intimately acquainted with the principles of knowledge and good taste. It is like studying the painting and statues of old Masters. Read such works as are connected with moral and political history of England, for they are all full of application to our own national character and history, and they tend to awaken calm and deep thinking, and to produce that large and independent mode of considering subjects that become a free man."

A renegade Massachusetts Yankee was the inventor of the torpedo that destroyed the Cairo.

The Emancipation proclamation, it is said, will be promptly forthcoming on the day assigned, notwithstanding great pressure has been applied to have the President's stand he has taken. We shall then see—what we shall see.

Gen. Geo. F. Shepley, formerly a leading democrat of Maine, it is confidently stated, heartily endorses the emancipation policy of the President, and is in favor of arming the blacks, if necessary, in order to put down the rebellion.

A radical Emancipationist has been elected Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives, and the Senate unanimously passed a resolution in favor of the President's scheme of compensated emancipation.

See advertisement of small farm for sale. A good bargain is offered.

Thirty eight Sioux Indians who had participated in the late massacre in Minnesota, were hung at Mankato on the 26th.

The California steamers will hereafter be conveyed by armed vessels.

Elias Merrill, Esq., late Treasurer of the P. & K. Railroad Co., has been appointed a paymaster in the army.

Rev. Geo. B. Gow, formerly of Waterville, has been elected Chaplain of the 3d Maine regiment, in place of Rev. H. C. Leonard, transferred to the 18th. We feel confident that this will prove a good selection.

Prince Alfred has been withdrawn as a candidate for the throne of Greece—Russia

